Bat Survey: Preliminary Roost Assessment

Clementina

Mellor, Blackburn

July 2025

Prepared for: Mr C. Rowell

Report prepared by: Verity Webster BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol CMIEEM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 24th June 2025 a Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken at Clementina, Barker Lane, Mellor.
- The house was assessed to determine the suitability for roosting bats. The building is considered to have no suitability for bats. No further survey work or mitigation is considered necessary.

1. Introduction

1.1 Application Site

1.1.1. This report details bat survey work at Clementina, Barker Lane, Mellor, BB2 7EE. National grid reference SD 669 308.

1.1.2. Mr Rowell commissioned Verity Webster Ltd to undertake the bat survey work to inform the planning application.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 The objectives of the Preliminary Roost Assessment are to determine:

- The suitability of the buildings on site to support a bat roost.
- Whether bats are currently using the buildings, or have done in the past.
- The potential status of any roost present.
- How bats might be using the site and the potential species present.
- The potential impacts of the proposals on any potential roost present or on bats using the site.
- The requirement for further survey work and/or mitigation.
- How any impacts might be avoided, mitigated and/or ameliorated, including advice on European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) application if required.
- The potential for biodiversity net gain on site.

1.2.2 The format and content of this report follow that required by the European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence application where appropriate.

1.3 Proposals

1.3.1 The proposals comprise the extension of the bungalow to the north with the addition of a conservatory.

1.4 Ecologist

1.4.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken by Verity Webster. Verity is a licensed bat surveyor (Bat Survey Class Licence WML CL18 (Class 2) Registration number: 2015-13858-CLS-CLS).

1.4.2 Verity has worked as an ecological consultant since 2007. She has undertaken preliminary bat assessments and further bat emergence/activity surveys for a large variety of projects and schemes, producing the required impact assessment and subsequent mitigation schemes/method statements when necessary.

2. Site Location

2.0.1 The survey site is located in a semi-rural location approximately 1.3k east of the main, residential area of Mellor and approximately 730m north of Yew Tree Drive (A6119).

2.0.2 Houses with gardens run north and south along Barker Lane, but beyond this there is extensive open countryside encompassing arable and grassland divided by tree lines and hedgerows.

2.0.3 Overall, the site is considered to be in a location with moderate suitability for bats.

Figure 1: Ordnance survey map showing the location of the proposed development site.

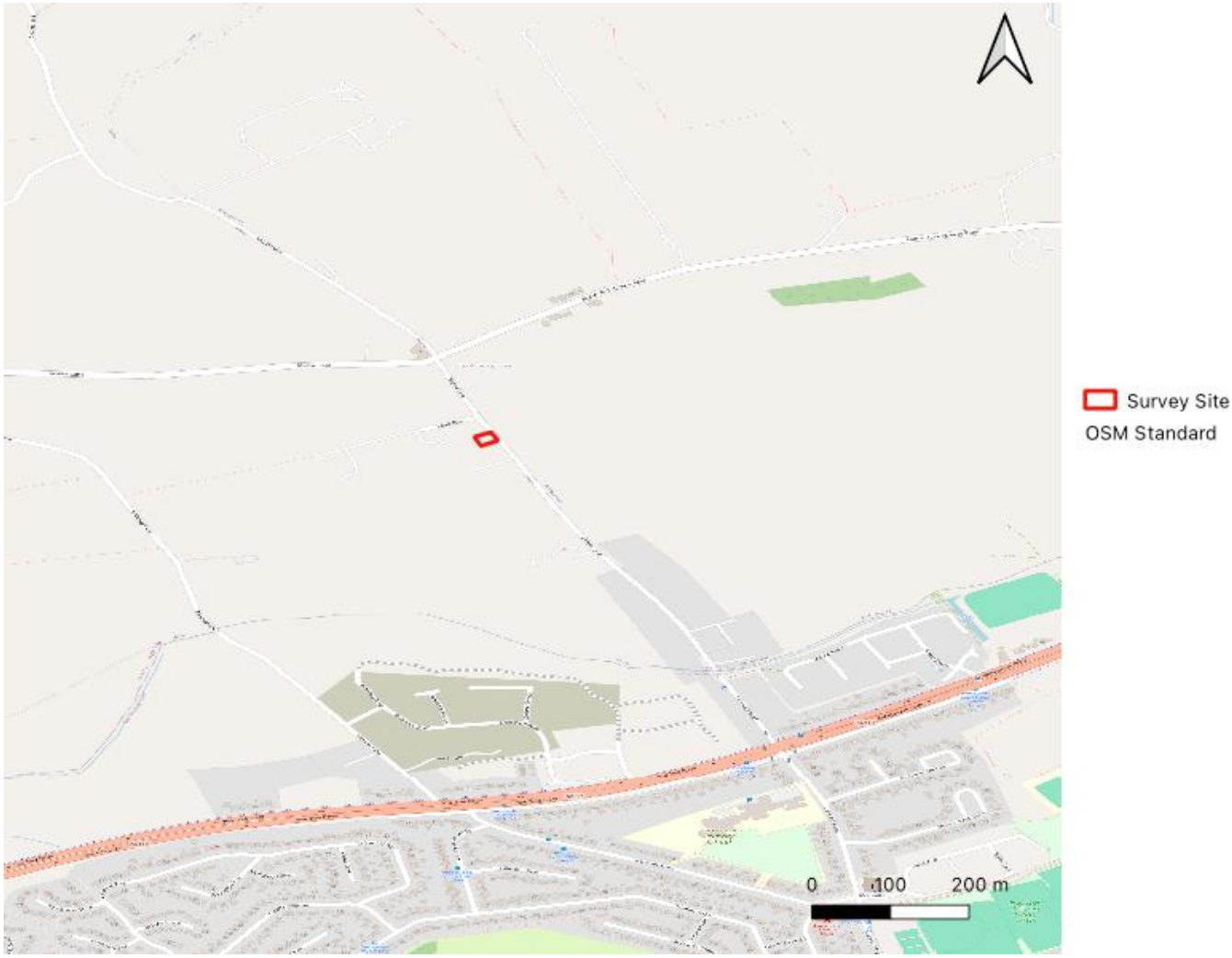

Figure 2: Aerial image showing the proposed development site and immediate surroundings

3. The Survey Site

3.0.1 Clementina lies off the west side of Barker Lane with a mature garden to the west.

The House

3.0.2 The building is detached bungalow with a pitched, tiled roof. The walls are brick and rendered. There are existing conservatories; two on the north elevation and one on the south elevation. There are UPVC soffits around the eaves. The windows and doors are also UPVC.

3.0.3 The loft space is large, approximately 2m to the apex. There is small skylight that allows entry of natural light. The tiles are lined with bitumen felt and partial insulation.

3.0.4 There is a garage constructed of brick and stone with a pitched, tiled roof. This will not be impacted as a result of the works.

The south elevation of the house where the conservatory is proposed.

4. Legislation

Full details of relevant legislation and planning policy can be found in Appendix A.

4.1 UK and EU Legislation

4.1.1 Key legislation regarding the protection of bats:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

4.1.2 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2018, it is a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

4.2 Planning Policy and Legislation

4.2.1 Under the NERC Act 2006, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site before they make a decision on the planning permission.

4.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) encourages Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Chapter 15, Para 180 of NPPF states: *''The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

a) ***protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity*** *or geological value and soils….*

d) ***minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures***".

Para 181 states: "*Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites;*
allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a
strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of
natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.''

Para 185 identifies that plans should do the following to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity:

a) "***Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and***

b) ***Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and peruse opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.***"

Para 186 states that "*when determining planning applications, local authorities should apply the following principles:*

a) ***if significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided…,adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused''***

4.2.3 The local planning authority has a responsibility, therefore, to obtain all information regarding the potential for protected species on a site prior to making a decision about a proposal.

5. Survey Methodology

5.0.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken in accordance with currently accepted guidance: Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 Data sources used to establish background information about bats and their likely presence in the locality:

- Magic Map, Natural England (2016)
- Bing Maps (2017)

5.1.2 Satellite mapping, Ordnance survey, road map, habitat and designated site data from Magic Map (Natural England, 2014) was used to assess the value of the surrounding habitat for bats in the area at a landscape scale (5km), including any potentially important habitat corridors (linear habitat features), feeding grounds or potential roost opportunities, such as large expanses of woodland. The features and habitats immediately surrounding the site (local area) were also assessed at a finer scale as these influence the likely presence of bats within the survey site.

5.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

5.2.1 An internal and external inspection of the structures was undertaken during daylight to determine the suitability for bats and establish, if possible, whether bats are using the building or have been in the past.

5.2.2 All accessible parts of the structures were inspected to look for bats and signs of the presence of bats, including:

- Droppings.
- Feeding remains including moth and butterfly wings.
- Staining from urine or oils near crevices or holes or on timber (such as roof beams), walls, chimney breasts etc.
- Scratch marks on walls and timber.
- Squeaking or chattering calls.

5.2.3 The systematic search inside the building included inspection of beams, floors, surfaces of stored materials, loose roof insulation or felt covering, junctions between roof timbers and timbers and the walls, and crevices within brickwork. Potential access into the building was also inspected by searching for holes in insulation and any light penetration into the interior from the outside.

5.2.4 The assessment outside the building included inspection of all walls, windows, window sills, fascias, soffits, eaves and tiles, including a search for any crevices under tiles, under lifted lead flashing or lifted roofing felt, missing mortar, gaps in the ridge or gable end of the roofs, crevices in brickwork or under flaking paintwork or render, gaps in cladding or hanging tiles and any other potential bat roost opportunities.

5.2.5 Equipment: During the survey, a strong torch with directional beam was used to inspect the buildings.

5.2.6 As a result of the external preliminary roost assessment, the structures on site was characterised as having 'none', 'negligible', 'low', 'medium' or 'high' suitability for bats. It may also be possible to confirm the presence of a roost.

5.2.7 Buildings or structures typically characterised as having suitability at the following levels:

- **None:** No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year.

- **Negligible suitability:** No obvious habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats. Modern or newly-built well-sealed structures may fall into this category. Structures that are metal clad with metal internal beams might have negligible potential if there are no favourable roosting spaces. Structures may also be unfavourable due to the level of disrepair, being subject to poor weather conditions.

- **Low suitability:** Structures will have sub-optimal roost features with limited potential for roosting bats. Features may be used by single bats opportunistically, but do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by large numbers of bats.

- **Medium suitability**: Structures may have a few features with potential for bats, that provide enough space, shelter, protection and other suitable conditions, or several features with limited potential for bats. It may also be that a potentially suitable structure is situated in an area with habitat that has an only low potential for foraging and commuting bats.

- **High suitability:** Structures support at least one or more features that provide opportunities for roosting bats such that they might be used regularly, for longer periods by larger numbers of bats. These may be external features, such as lifted weatherboard or crevices in brick or stonework, or internal, such as large loft spaces with potential access. Barns, with open doorways and windows with wooden rafters and beams, may fall into this category. If a structure is close to good habitats, such as a waterway, marshland or woodland, this also increases the potential for roosting bats.

- **Confirmed roost presence**: It is evident as a result of signs from inspection, such as droppings, or sight of bats, that a roost exists within the building. It is not always possible to ascertain the presence or absence of a roost even if some signs, such as droppings or feeding remains are found.

6. Survey Limitations

6.0.1 The survey was undertaken in daylight in late June. At this time of year bats are likely to be occupying summer roost site. The house is considered unfavourable for winter hibernation, for which bats require a constant temperature in a humid environment, but would be more suited to a summer roost site. Evidence of bats on the exterior of a building are unlikely to be present, having been washed away by the weather, but evidence of the use of the interior of the building by bats, either in the current or previous seasons is likely to be present where signs (such as droppings and feeding remains) are protected from the elements.

6.0.2 The records data from the local records centre was not obtained to inform this assessment. In this

case, the external and internal inspection is considered sufficient to inform appropriate recommendations about the need or otherwise of further survey work and, or mitigation.

7. Findings: Preliminary Roost Assessment

7.1 Suitability of the Locality for Bats

7.1.1 At a landscape level, the area surrounding the survey site considered to be moderate for bats. Refer to Figure 2.

7.1.2 The surrounding residential landscape provides good potential roost opportunities whilst the nearby greenspace, comprising grazed pasture, arable land and tree lines provide good potential foraging habitat. However, there is a lack of woodland and watercourses in close proximity, which will impact the bat species expected in the area.

7.1.3 The bats most likely to be present are the widespread common and soprano pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* respectively). Species that favour open space, such as Leisler's (*Nyctalus leisleri*) and noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*) are also expected, as they can travel large distances to open countryside. Woodland is not extensive in the locality so species such as Natterer's bat (*Myotis natterri*), whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*) and Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*) are less likely to be present.

The Conservation Status of Bats in the Area

7.1.4 The conservation status of bats in the area is shown in Table 1.

***Table 1**: The Conservation Status of Bats in the area at a Local, County and Regional Level*

Species	***Local***	***County***	***Regional***
Common pipistrelle	*Likely to be common in the area. There are records of this species in the area (10km).*	*Common and widespread Frequently recorded.*	*Common and widespread Frequently recorded across the Northwest*
Soprano pipistrelle	*Likely to be present due to the presence of riparian habitat.*	*Widespread. Frequently recorded.*	*Common and widespread Frequently recorded across the Northwest*
Nathusius's pipistrelle	*Likely to be rare in the area.*	*Infrequently recorded, but this may be due to low survey effort. Not yet recorded breeding in the county.*	*Rare across the northwest. A migratory species.*
Brown long-eared bat	*Likely to be in the area. There is a recent record of this species within 10km of the site.*	*Common and widespread Frequently recorded.*	*Common and widespread Frequently recorded across the Northwest.*
Natterer's bat	*Likely to be in the area, although this species*	*Scattered distribution in Lancashire.*	*Widespread and scattered across the Northwest.*

	favours woodland habitat, which is infrequent in the landscape.		
Noctule	*Present*	*Widespread and frequently recorded.*	*Common and widespread. Frequently recorded in the Northwest.*
Whiskered bat	*Present but likely rare*	*Present*	*Widespread.*
Brandt's bat	*Rare / absent*	*Present*	*Widespread.*
Alcathoe's bat	*Unknown*	*Unknown*	*Widespread. Likely under-recorded.*
Daubenton's	*Presence is likely due to the riparian habitat present.*	*Widespread, frequently recorded near water.*	*Widespread*
Serotine	*Rare / absent*	*Unknown*	*Restricted to south and southwest Britain, rarely recorded in the northwest.*
Leislers	*Rare*	*Unknown*	*Rare, but widespread in Britain. Present in the northwest.*
Barbastelle	*Unlikely to be present in the area. This species is a woodland-specialist and there is a lack of this habitat present.*	*Unknown*	*Present south of a line from North Wales to the Wash.*

7.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

7.2.1 The building inspection and bat roost assessment was undertaken in daylight on 24th June 2025.

The House

7.2.2 Externally the walls and soffits are well-sealed with no evident crevices or cracks. Similarly, the tiles appear to be well-sealed, providing no visible opportunity for crevice-roosting bats.

7.2.3 Internally, the loft space of the house is large enough to provide an opportunity for bats to fly, for example, some species such as brown long-eared bats favour fight space in which to 'light sample' prior to leaving a roost. However, the space is well-sealed from the exterior and no evidence of bats (droppings, feeding remains or skeletons) was found.

7.2.4 **Overall, given the location and the absence potential roost features, the house is considered to have no suitability for bats.**

The loft space.

Showing the skylight in the loft space.

Showing the well-fitted soffit where the conservatory is proposed.

8. Appraisal

8.0.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment of the house at Clementina was undertaken to determine the suitability of the building for roosting bats and to determine the likely impact of the proposed works on bats.

8.0.2 No bats or signs of the presence of bats were found during the external and internal inspection of the house.

8.0.3 Given the absence of potential roost opportunities within the structure, the house is considered to have no suitability for bats.

8.0.4 The proposals to install a conservatory on the south elevation is not expected to have any negative impact upon bats or their roosts. No further survey work or mitigation is considered necessary.

9. References

- BING maps (Accessed 2025) http://www.bing.com/mapspreview
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Google maps (Accessed 2025) https://www.google.co.uk/maps
- MAGIC Map (Accessed 2025) http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx. DEFRA.

• APPENDIX A: Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

UK AND EU LEGISLATION

9.1. KEY LEGISLATION

9.1.1. Key legislation regarding the protection of bats:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

9.2. WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

9.2.1. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is UK legislation.

9.2.2. Bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981. Under Section 9 of this legislation it is an offence to:

- Kill, injure or take a bat.
- Possess, a live or dead bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure of place which any bat uses as shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.
- Internationally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a bat uses as shelter or protection.
- Sell, offer or expose for sale any live or dead bat.

9.3. COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

9.3.1. Schedule 12 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, amended by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by removing the need to prove intent to damage a roost / harm (etc) a bat or other species listed on Schedule 1 by adding the words 'or recklessly' after 'intentionally' into the wording in Section 9 of the WCA 1981. The CROW act also strengthened the penalties for offences to bats and other species listed on Schedule 5.

9.4. CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)

9.4.1. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 in respect of England and Wales.

9.4.2. The 1994 Regulations transposed Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law. The regulations came into force on 30 October 1994.

9.4.3. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species, including bats.

9.4.4. Under the Regulations, competent authorities (ie any government department or public body) have a general duty, in the exercise of any of their functions, to have regard to the EC Habitats Directive.

9.4.5. With regard to European Protected Species (including bats), the Regulations make it an office to:

- Deliberately capture;
- Kill;
- Disturb or;
- Trade in animals listed in Schedule 2, which include all UK bat species.

9.5. European Protected Species (EPS) Licenses and the Three Tests

9.5.1. These actions can me made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities. Licenses may be granted for a number of purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserve public health and safety). For such a licence to be granted the appropriate authority would have to be satisfied that an application has met the three tests, which are:

1) - The licence may be granted ''to preserve public health or public safety or for reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences or primary importance for the environment''

2) - There must be ''no satisfactory alternative''

3) - The proposal ''will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species at a favourable conservation status in its natural range''

9.6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES (NERC) ACT 2006 (PLANNING SYSTEM)

Planning Authorities: A Duty to Conserve Biodiversity

9.6.1. Under this legislation, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site *before* they make a decision on the planning permission.

9.6.2. Part 2, Section 40 confers on the planning authorities a duty to conserve biodiversity and states:

''*Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of biodiversity*''

Species of Principal Importance

9.6.3. Part 3, Section 41 requires the Secretary of State to ''*publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Secretary of State's opinion are of* ***principle importance*** *for the purpose of conserving biodiversity*''.

9.6.4. This requirement lead to production of a list of species and habitats of Principal Importance. This lists includes all UK bats.

PLANNING POLICY

9.7. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

10.7.1 Under the NERC Act 2006, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site before they make a decision on the planning permission.

10.7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) encourages Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Chapter 15, Para 180 of NPPF states: *''The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

b) ***protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity*** *or geological value and soils….*

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Para 181 states: "*Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites;*
allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a
strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of
natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.''

Para 185 identifies that plans should do the following to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity:

c) "***Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and***

d) ***Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and peruse opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.*****"**

Para 186 states that "*when determining planning applications, local authorities should apply the following principles:*

b) ***if significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided…,adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused'***

10.7.3 The local planning authority has a responsibility, therefore, to obtain all information regarding the potential for protected species on a site prior to making a decision about a proposal.

9.8. ODPM CIRCULAR 06/2005: BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

10.8.1 This document, to be read in conjunction with NPPF provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It makes it clear that it is the intention of the government that local authorities and developers consider protected species at the earliest possible stage in the planning process. Any planning application that is likely to affect protected species should come with details of the surveys which have been undertaken and should include, if necessary, recommendations for mitigation. Applications which do not include sufficient data should be rejected.